

-13-

CLAIMS:

1. A vacuum bandage system for use with a wound having a wound surface, the vacuum bandage system comprising:
 - 5 a wound dressing member having a plurality of holes and a port in communication with the holes and configured to be coupled to a vacuum source, and
 - a wound insert configured for placement within the wound between the wound surface and the wound dressing member, the insert being made of a material which is not porous or foam-like.
- 10 2. The vacuum bandage of claim 1, wherein the wound dressing member comprises medical-grade silicone.
3. The vacuum bandage of claim 1, wherein the wound insert is thin, flexible, and includes a plurality of discrete passageways in communication with the vacuum source.
- 15 4. The vacuum bandage of claim 3, wherein the passageways are conduits through the wound insert.
5. The vacuum bandage of claim 4, wherein the insert includes a top surface, bottom surface, and side surface, and wherein the conduits form holes in one or more of the side surfaces, and wherein the insert further includes holes in
- 20 communication with the conduits and forming holes in one or more of the top and bottom surfaces.
6. The vacuum bandage of claim 3, wherein the insert includes a top surface and a bottom surface, and wherein the passageways comprise channels formed in each of the top and bottom surfaces.
- 25 7. The vacuum bandage of claim 6, wherein the insert further includes holes between the channels and the top and bottom surfaces.
8. The vacuum bandage of claim 7, wherein the wound dressing member is made of a generally non-porous material.
9. The vacuum bandage of claim 1, wherein the insert is
- 30 cylindrical in shape.
10. The vacuum bandage of claim 9, wherein the insert is made of approximately 50 durometer silicone.

-14-

11. The vacuum bandage of claim 9, wherein the insert has a diameter of approximately 0.0925 inch (2.35 mm).

12. A wound insert for use with a vacuum bandage having a suction tube coupled to a vacuum source and a wound dressing member coupled to a wound and including a tube port receiving the suction tube, the insert comprising:
5 a thin, flexible member including a plurality of discrete passageways in communication with the vacuum bandage, the thin, flexible member being spaced from the suction tube.

13. A wound insert for use with a vacuum bandage including a wound dressing member coupled to a wound, a port of the wound dressing member,
10 and a tube coupled to the port and to a vacuum source, the wound insert being positioned between the vacuum bandage and a wound surface of the wound, the wound insert comprising:

a body made of a generally non-porous, flexible material.

14. The wound insert of claim 13, wherein the body is generally rod-shaped.
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15. The wound insert of claim 14, wherein the body has a diameter of approximately 0.0925 inch (2.35 mm).

16. The wound insert of claim 13, wherein the body includes discrete passageways.
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17. The wound insert of claim 16, wherein the body includes a top surface and a bottom surface and the passageways comprise channels formed in the top and bottom surfaces.

18. The wound insert of claim 17, wherein the body includes side surfaces and the passageways comprise conduits through the body extending from one side surface to another.
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19. The wound insert of claim 13, wherein the body is made of a generally non-adhesive material.

20. A method of treating a wound having a tunneled portion, comprising:
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placing a wound insert within the tunneled portion of the wound, the wound insert being made of a material which is not porous or foam-like,

-15-

placing a wound dressing member over the wound insert so that the wound insert is positioned between a wound surface of the wound and the wound dressing member,

5 coupling the wound dressing member to a vacuum source,
 placing a sealing film over the wound dressing member for attachment
to healthy skin surrounding the wound, and
 creating a negative pressure between the sealing film and a surface of
the wound.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the wound insert is generally
10 rod-shaped.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the wound insert is made of a
generally non-porous material.

23. A vacuum bandage system for use with a wound having a
wound surface, the system comprising:
15 a vacuum bandage configured to be coupled to the wound and
including a port configured to be coupled to a vacuum source and holes in
communication with the port, and
 means for preventing an ulcerated portion of the wound from forming
a bridge to another ulcerated portion of the wound.

24. The vacuum bandage system of claim 23, wherein the
20 preventing means includes a rod-shaped wound insert.

25. The vacuum bandage system of claim 24, wherein the wound
insert is made of a generally non-porous material.

26. A wound insert for inhibiting unwanted wound closure, the
25 wound insert comprising a thin, flexible member made of medical grade silicone and
including a plurality of discrete passageways.

27. A wound insert for inhibiting unwanted wound closure, the
wound insert comprising a plurality of rods that are made of a generally non-porous,
flexible material and that are held together by webs that are tearable to permit the rods
30 to be separated from each other.